

SEPTEMBER 2019

# MESSAGING MATTERS



**LESLIE KROHN**  
Chief Communications Officer

# ARGONNE'S MESSAGING JOURNEY

WHERE WE STARTED

**Landscape  
Analysis**

WHAT WE DID

**Positioning and  
Key Messages**

OUR PATH FORWARD

**Implementation**

WHERE WE STARTED

# LANDSCAPE ANALYSIS



# SITUATION ANALYSIS

## Key audiences lacked awareness and understanding

- National laboratory system
- Full depth and breadth of Argonne's research and impact

## Argonne had a relatively stable funding position

- Increased funding FY18 and FY19
- More proposals written, but more competition

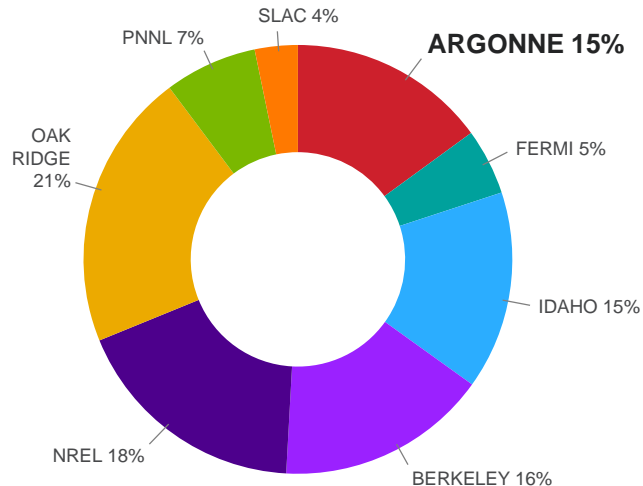
## Leadership demanded enhanced communications

- Vision and strategic priorities
- Longer-term funding goals and partnerships
- Improvements in safety

# ARGONNE'S VOLUME OF COVERAGE WAS STRONG, PARTICULARLY IN SOCIAL MEDIA

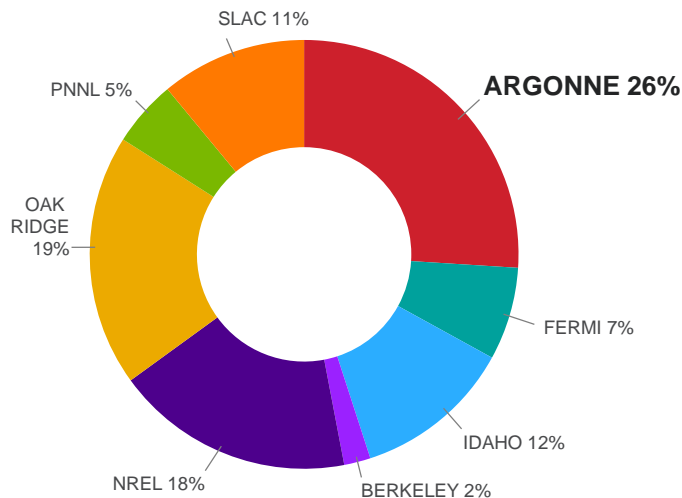
## SHARE OF VOICE: TRADITIONAL MEDIA

61,500 total topic mentions



## SHARE OF VOICE: SOCIAL MEDIA

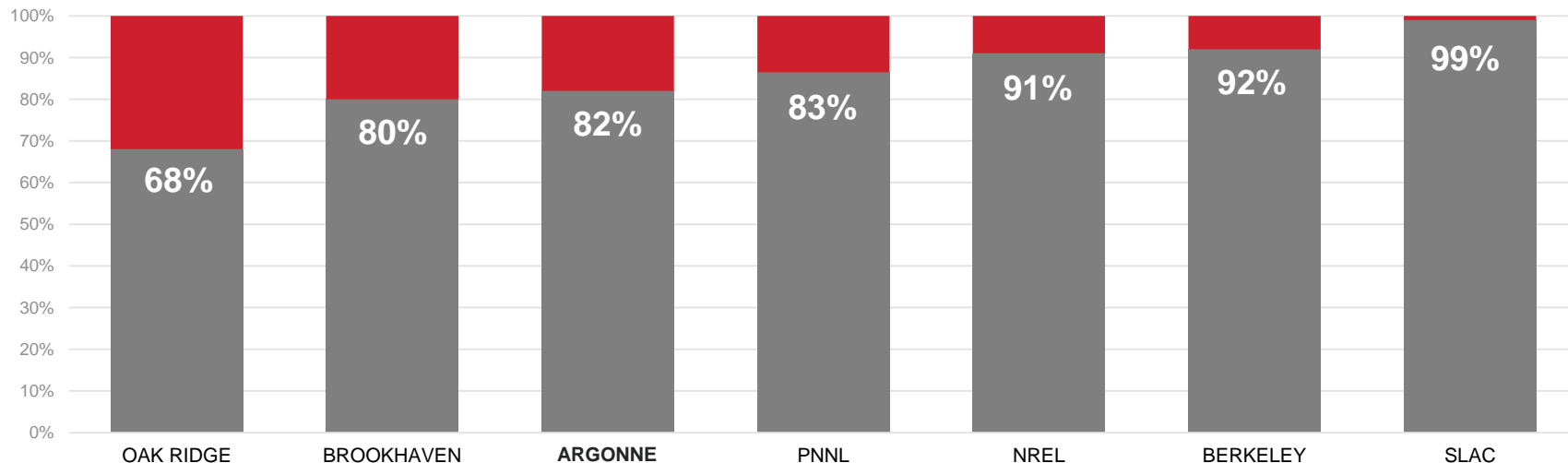
249,800 total topic mentions



*Relative volume of conversation among peers  
Past 12 months, Meltwater; Past six months, NetBase*

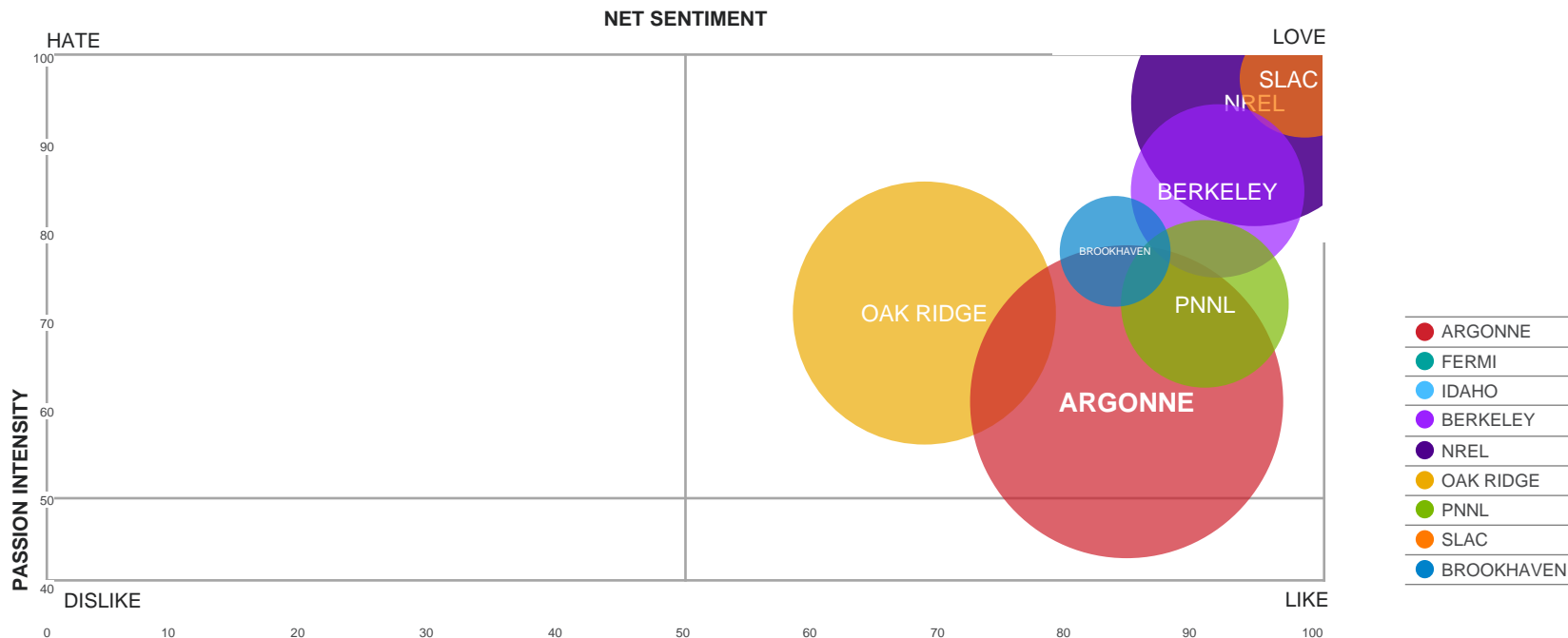
# DESPITE THE COVERAGE VOLUME, ARGONNE LAGGED MANY FELLOW LABS

## NET SENTIMENT

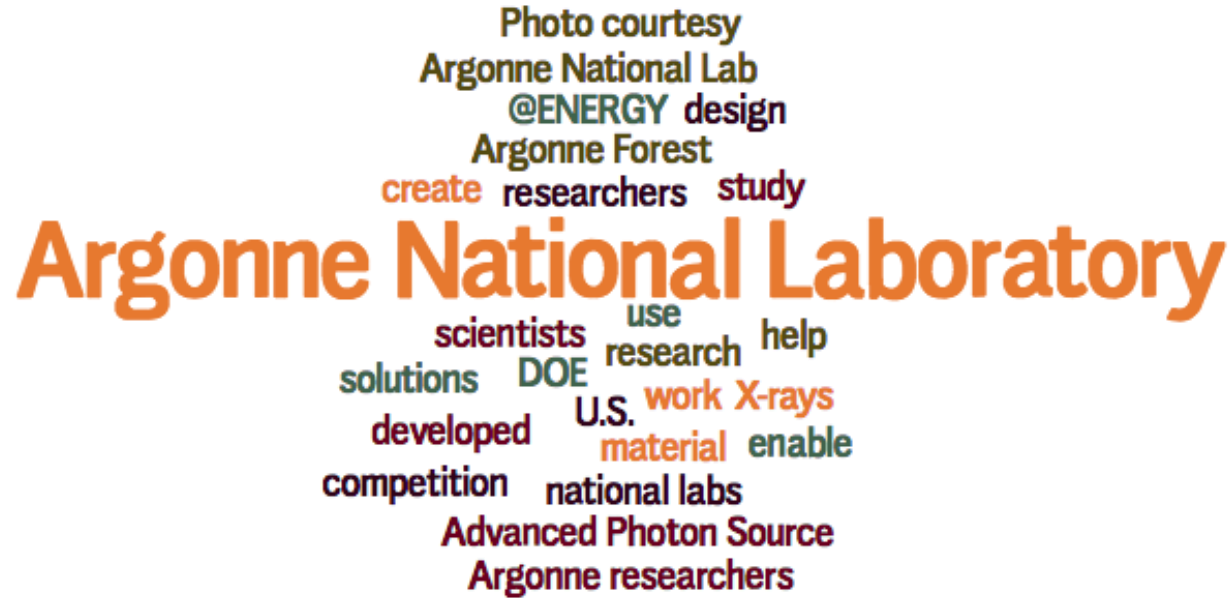


*Ratio of positive and negative comments in conversation  
Past six months, NetBase*

# ARGONNE'S CONVERSATIONS DIDN'T INSPIRE THE PASSION THAT OUR PEERS' DID



*Passion represents both the overall volume of conversation combined with conversation's sentiment  
Past six months, NetBase*



*Word clouds represent the most common words used in a topic's online conversation  
Past six months, NetBase*



# OBSERVATIONS AND AN AUDIT COMPLEMENTED THE RESEARCH

We talked  
[very]  
technically,  
*to all  
audiences*



We focused  
on science,  
*not impact  
or relevance*



Communications  
went over people's heads,  
and we lost them

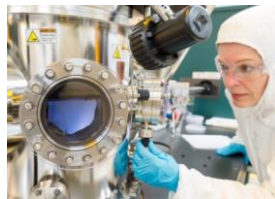


# WHAT WAS NEEDED

A comprehensive communications program and correlating team structure that:



Created a clear message about the importance of Argonne and other national laboratories



Helped Argonne “own” priority areas of focus



Tailored information and messages to key audiences



Anticipated and managed important reputational issues

Argonne   
NATIONAL LABORATORY

All to underscore Argonne’s relevance and impact as essential to the national lab system

WHAT WE DID

WHAT SHOULD  
WE SAY?

# WE NEEDED A MESSAGING ARCHITECTURE TO GUIDE ALL COMMUNICATIONS

And we wanted every part of the lab to buy in



Brand  
Architecture



Message  
Map



Media Coverage  
Op-Eds



News Content  
Website Copy  
Social Media  
Blog Posts  
Emails



Speeches

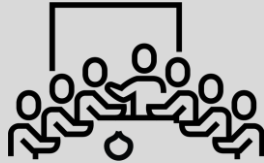
# THE PROCESS TOOK TIME

2018



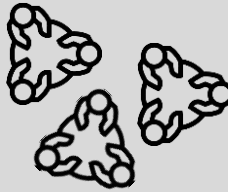
MAY

Conducted initial research and constructed preliminary brand architecture



JUNE

Shared preliminary brand architecture with Board



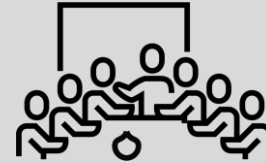
JULY

Held a work session with key leaders to refine the messaging



AUG

Solicited further input from additional leaders



OCT

Presented updated brand architecture to the board and gathered feedback



NOV

Finalized brand architecture



# INTERVIEWS WERE KEY TO OUR MESSAGING



## Key Questions

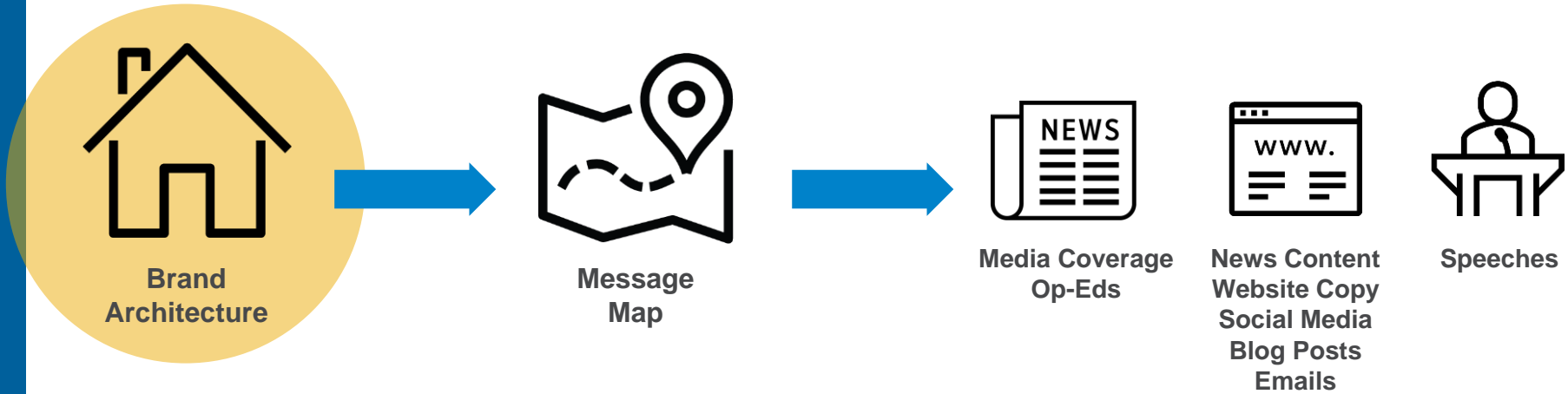
- What makes Argonne unique?
- What are we good at?
- What do we do better than others?
- What do our collaborators come to us for?
- What makes you proud about Argonne?
- Which of our communications were effective?
- Which missed the mark?

# THEMES BEGAN TO EMERGE

## Consistent Answers

- Our impact on our community, region, nation, world
- Our role as convener
- The scale of the problems we work on
- The discoveries we make
- How we partner
- Our Chicago location
- Our legacy/history

# WE COMBINED THEM INTO A MESSAGING ARCHITECTURE TO GUIDE COMMUNICATIONS



# WE LEVERAGED A FRAMEWORK FAMILIAR TO OUR MANAGEMENT CONTRACTOR



<b>BRAND PROMISE</b>	Our unique essence, core to our existence and differentiating us from peers
<b>BRAND PILLARS</b>	Ownable themes that provide a platform for all communications
<b>PROOF POINTS</b>	Research, programs, partnerships and activities that support each pillar
<b>MESSAGE MAP</b>	Focused key messages, reasons to believe, and proof points
<b>BRAND KEYWORDS</b>	Key words and messages that the brand wants to own within the industry topics
<b>STORY ANGLES</b>	The potential ways that the brand's story may come to life to support each pillar

# ARGONNE'S BRAND MESSAGING ARCHITECTURE



Accelerating science and technology that drive U.S. prosperity and security

## WHO WE ARE

Our unique brand promise carried through all content.

## HOW WE DO IT

The ownable brand pillars that shape our collective brand narrative by aligning the focus of our communications.

## WHY IT MATTERS

How each effort drives real world results.

### Pivotal Discovery

Confronting the most pressing questions that science and technology can solve to lay the foundation for decades of subsequent advancements

### Pioneering Leadership

Building upon the legacy of America's first national lab by driving collaboration with the University of Chicago, other research institutions, government agencies, and industry partners

### Science at Scale

Leveraging Argonne's deep and broad multi-disciplinary teams, world class facilities, and powerful scientific tools to convene and train the world's leading scientists and engineers to solve the most complex problems

## The Argonne National Laboratory Impact

Unlocking new science and technological frontiers that secure America's energy future and deliver economic growth



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## Pivotal Discovery

- Patents
- Prizes/Honors/ Awards
- Published Papers
- Partner/User research
- Scientific Presentations
- Lab Directed R&D
- Next generation science (e.g. Quantum, AI)
- Commercialization Successes

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## Pioneering Leadership

- DOE collaborations (e.g. JCESR, EFRC's)
- Chicago Quantum Exchange
- Academic Alliances (e.g. IME, NAISE)
- Joint research with Fermi and other national labs
- Industry collaboration (e.g. ACCESS)

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# PROOF POINTS SHAPE AND REINFORCE OUR BRAND STORY



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## Science at Scale

- Over 8,000 Users/Year
- Over 1,500 Scientists and Engineers on Staff
- 5 User Facilities
- Materials Engineering Research Facility
- South Pole Telescope
- Modeling (e.g. weather, grid, supernovae, microbiome, brain)
- Million Veterans Program

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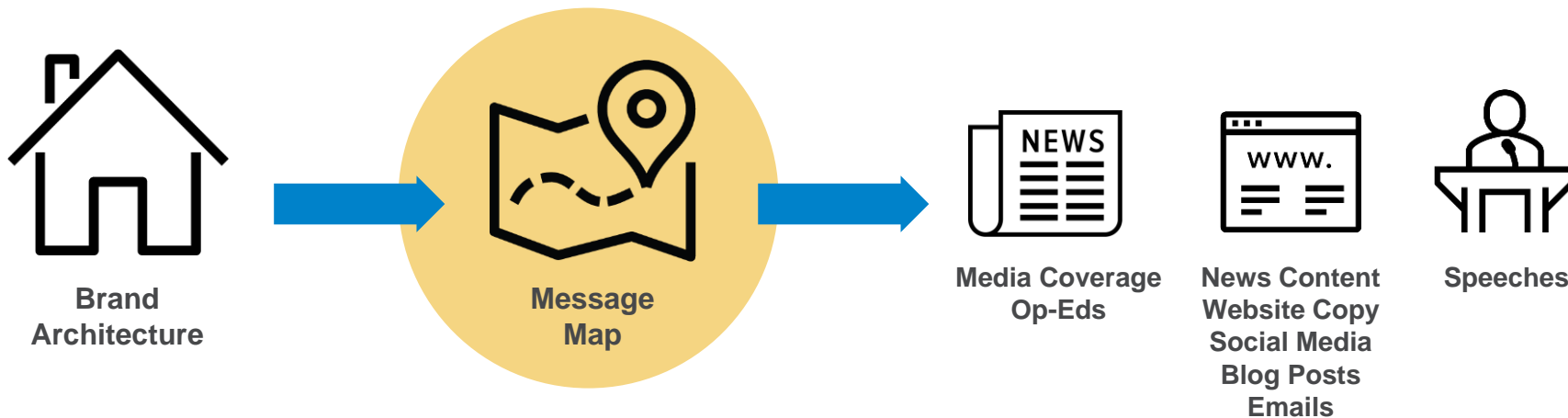
Unlocking new science and technological frontiers that secure America's energy future and deliver economic growth

A close-up photograph of a person wearing safety goggles and blue nitrile gloves, holding a clear vial. The image is overlaid with a semi-transparent blue rectangle containing text and a logo.

**“Argonne isn’t unique,  
but it does things uniquely.”**



# MOVING FROM MESSAGING TO A NARRATIVE



# ARGONNE NATIONAL LABORATORY

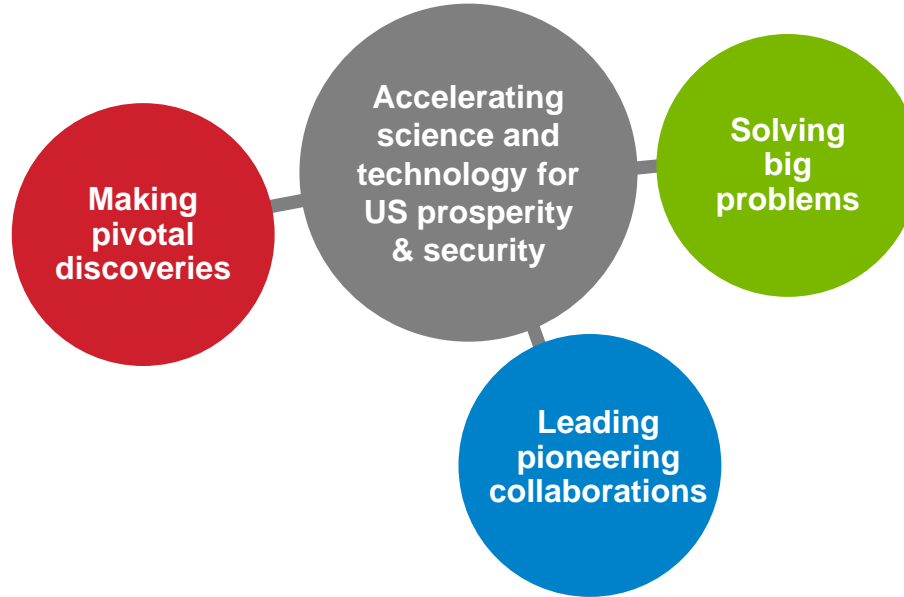
## Message Map

Accelerating  
science and  
technology for  
US prosperity  
& security



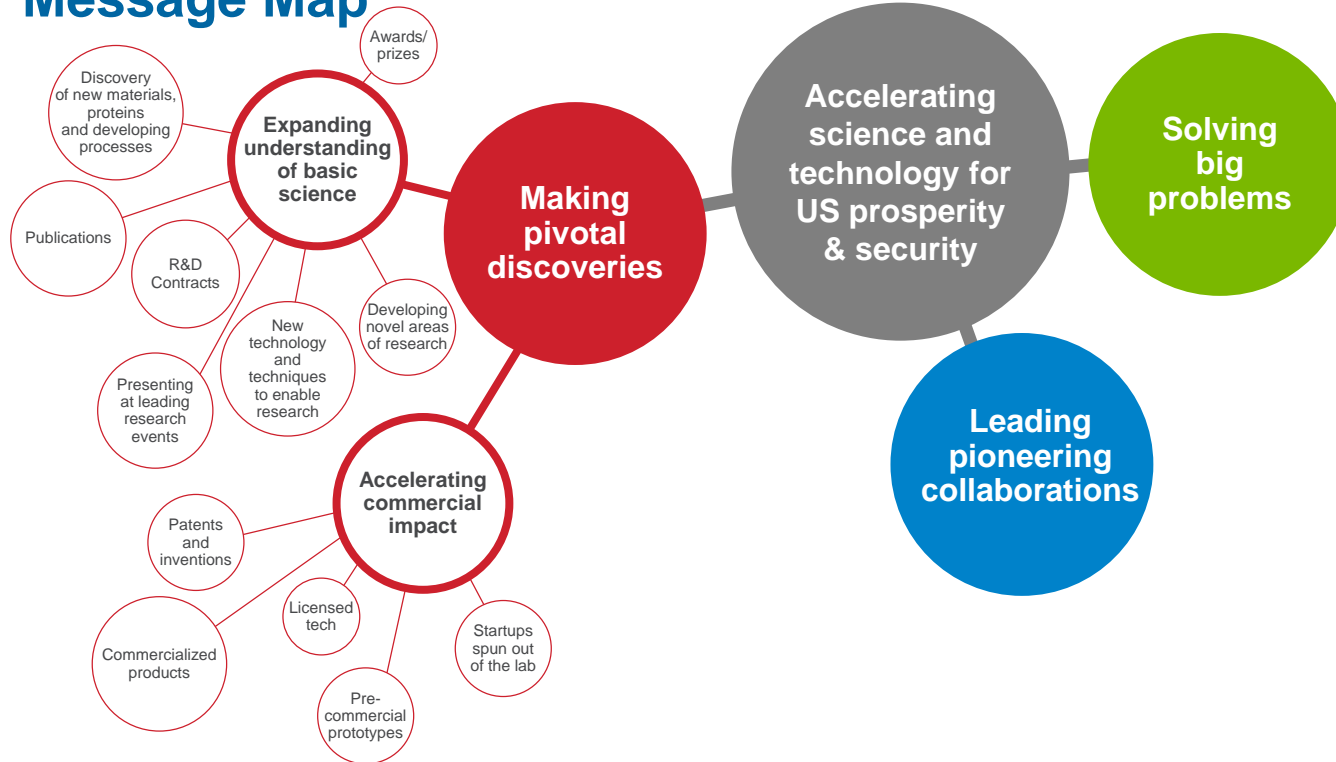
# ARGONNE NATIONAL LABORATORY

## Message Map



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## Message Map



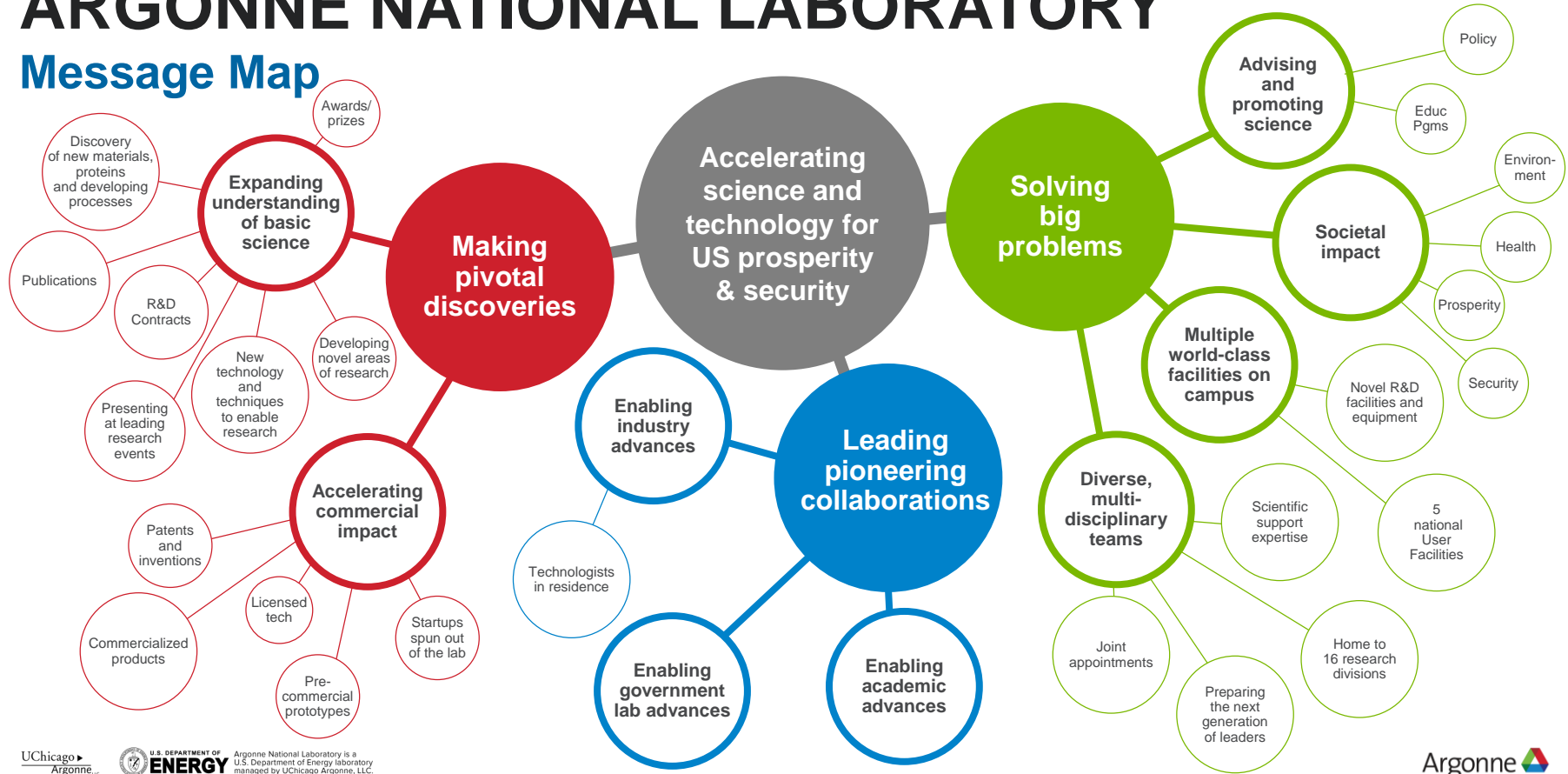
# ARGONNE NATIONAL LABORATORY

## Message Map



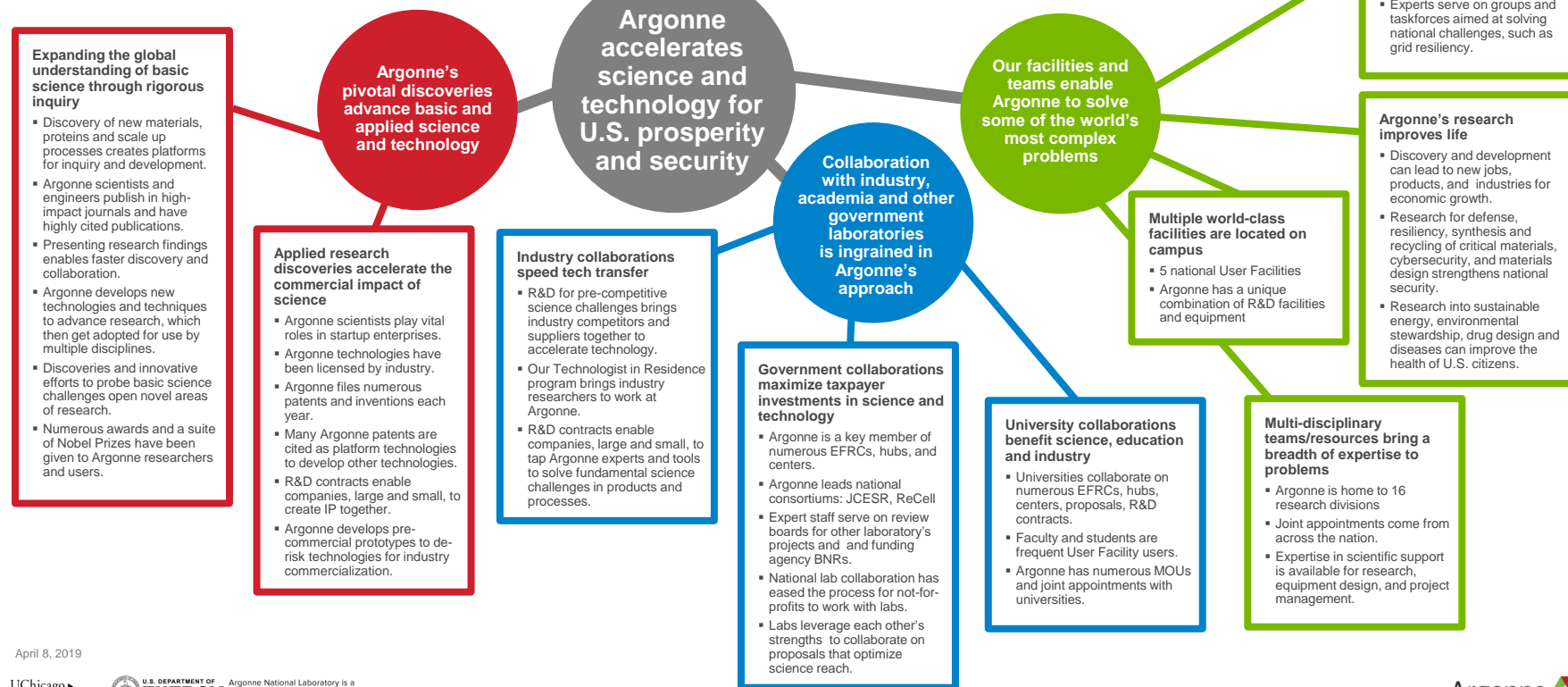
# ARGONNE NATIONAL LABORATORY

## Message Map



# ARGONNE NATIONAL LABORATORY

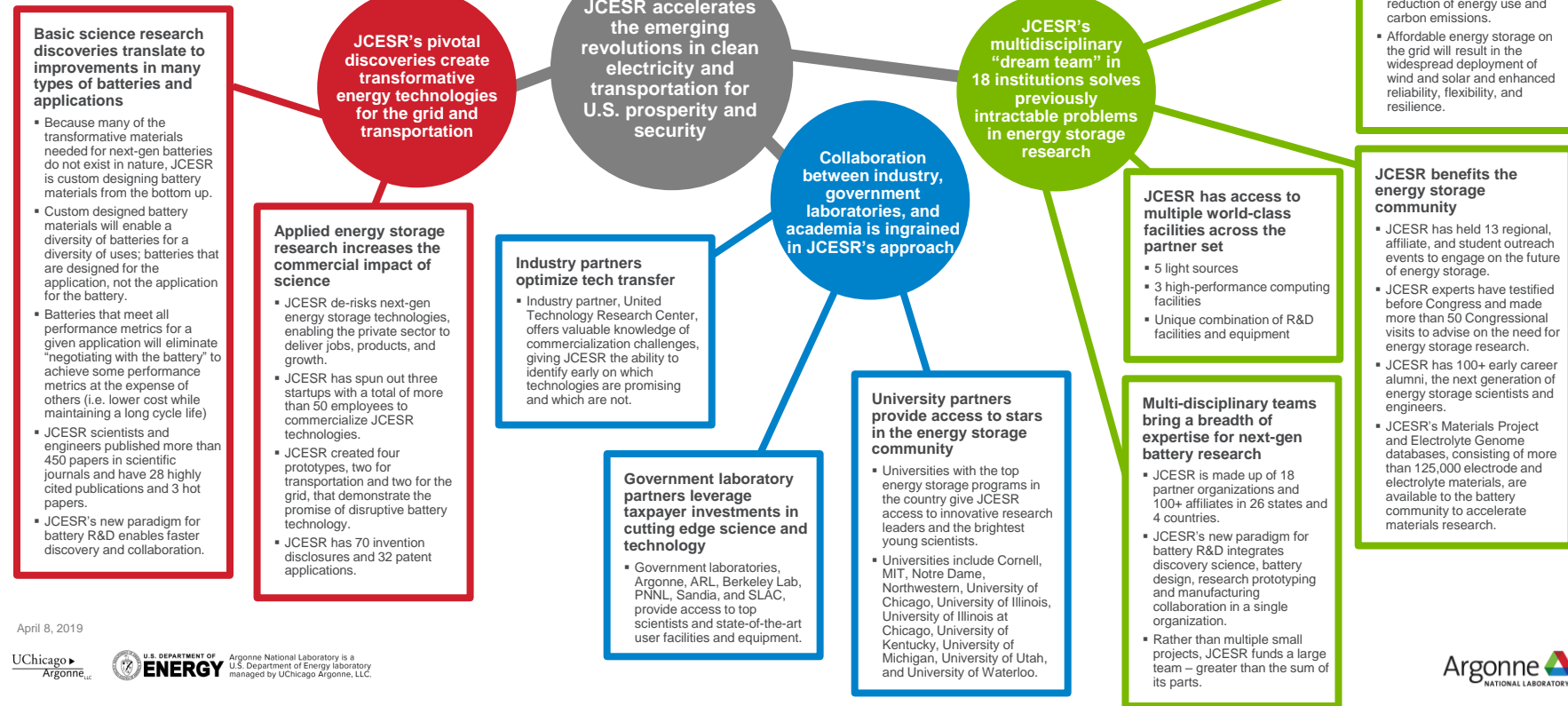
## Narrative



April 8, 2019

# JOINT CENTER FOR ENERGY STORAGE RESEARCH (JCESR)

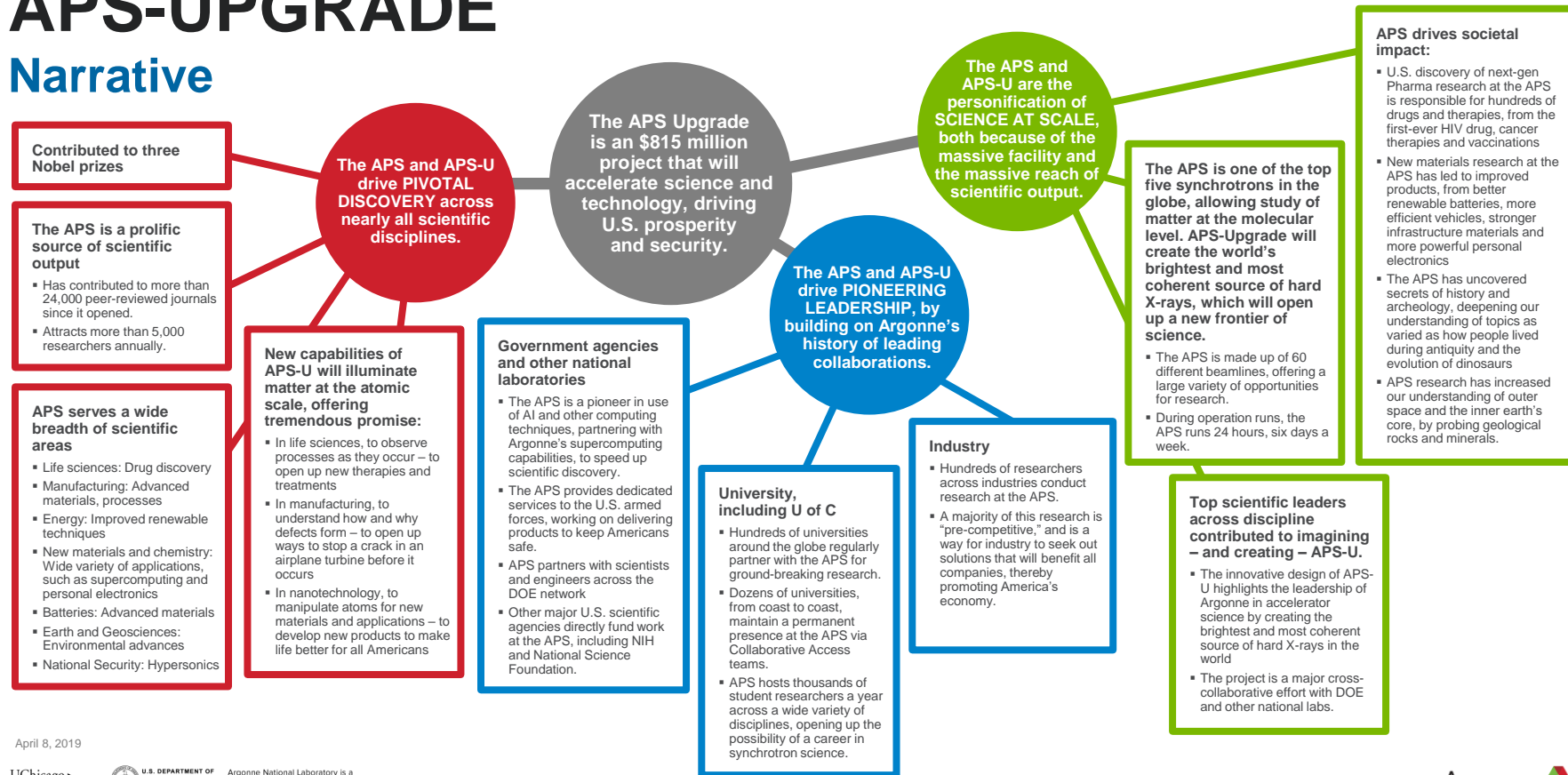
## Narrative



April 8, 2019

# APS-UPGRADE

## Narrative



April 8, 2019





OUR PATH FORWARD

# IMPLEMENTATION

# EMBEDDING THE MESSAGING IN ALL COMMUNICATIONS



Brand  
Architecture



Message  
Map



Media Coverage  
Op-Eds

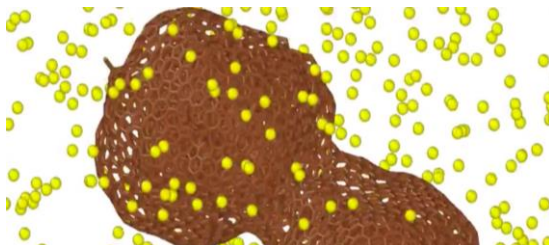


News Content  
Website Copy  
Social Media  
Blog Posts  
Emails



Speeches

# REWRITING PAST STORIES



**PIVOTAL DISCOVERY**

## Nanodiamonds

~~Nanodiamonds  
are Forever~~

**Argonne's Pivotal Nanodiamond  
Discovery Revolutionizes  
Industrial Lubricants**



**PIONEERING LEADERSHIP**

## JCESR Renewal

~~JCESR Renewed for  
Another Five Years~~

**Transforming Battery Futures  
through Academic/Industry  
Collaboration Led by Argonne**



**SCIENCE AT SCALE**

## Reactor Conversion

~~Argonne provides Technical  
Support for Conversion of Russian  
Research Reactors~~

**Argonne-Led Effort  
Shrinks Global Nuclear  
Weapons Risk**

# REWRITING

## Quantum Information Science Web Story

### Before

Argonne seeks precise control of quantum world for technological advancement

How to use a quantum computer

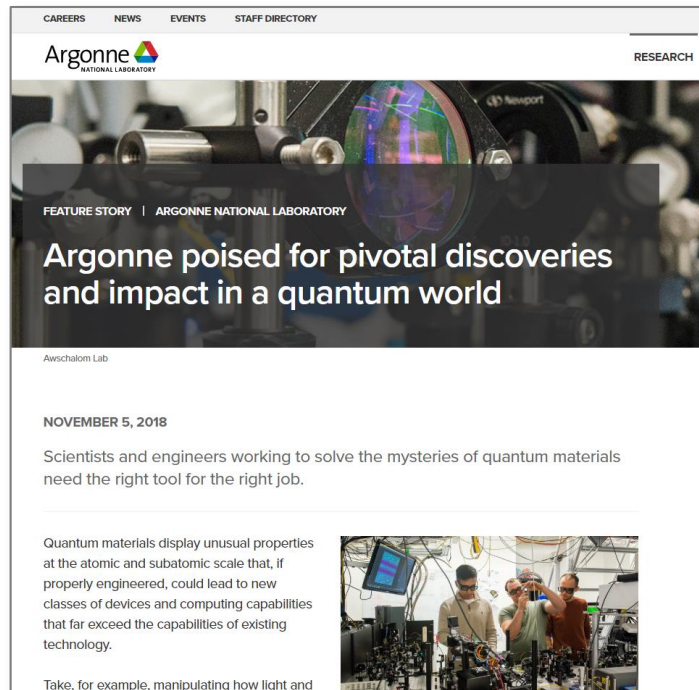
Chicago Quantum Exchange spawns quantum engineering workforce effort

### After

**Argonne poised for pivotal discoveries and impact in a quantum world**

**Argonne's quest to untangle entangled scientific phenomena**

**The quest to inspire the next generation of quantum scientists and engineers**



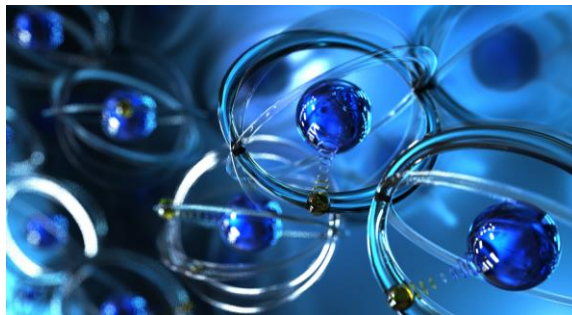
# “WHAT PILLAR ARE WE IN?”



## Aurora

FEATURED

- **Pioneering Leadership**
- **Science at Scale**



## Chicago Quantum Exchange

FOCUS ON

- **Pioneering Leadership**
- **Science at Scale**



## Argonne in the City

NASCENT EFFORT SUPPORTING

- **Pioneering Leadership**
- **Science at Scale**

# DRIVING CONSISTENCY IN PRESS RELEASES

**Pioneering** study takes closer look at improving microbial health and composition of area waterways

Scientists take X-ray aim in effort to **discover** new fuel catalyst

**Discovery** adapts natural membrane to make hydrogen fuel from water

New **discovery** is big on nanoscale

Argonne's **multidisciplinary teams** strengthen and secure America's complex electrical grid

Argonne's **pioneering** study of nuclear energy future



# WE INFUSED MESSAGING IN EXECUTIVE COMMUNICATIONS

THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO

Together We Multiply Our  
Impact on the Forefront of Science



**Collaborating** to  
address challenging  
problems

**Shaping and  
defining the future  
of science and  
technology**

Leveraging  
complementary  
resources to develop  
**future leaders**

UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO SCIENCE: ARGONNE'S ROLE

MAY 30, 2019



# OUR NEXT STEPS

## Building Out Message Maps

- Determine most important projects
- Create repository for access by all Comms team
- Train Comms team on usage

## Training Beyond Communications

- Continue to share messaging with all directorate leadership
- Hold open forums to share the messaging
- Leverage messaging from proposal writing to social media

## Measuring Impact

- Identify key words and phrases to measure
- Repeat measurement exercise annually

engineering  
accelerate  
development  
world-class  
facilities  
scientists  
impact  
U.S.  
EFRCs  
Research  
nation  
researchers  
Discovery  
Experts  
R&D  
publications  
Scale  
challenges  
users  
technology

# Q&A



# Argonne

NATIONAL LABORATORY

